

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the July 13, 2005 Office Action, and the amendments above together with the comments that follow are presented in a bona fide effort to address all issues raised in that Action and thereby place this case in condition for allowance. Claims 1 through 28 were pending in this application. Claims 4-7 and 21-28 were allowed. In response to the Office Action dated July 13, 2005, claims 1-3 and 8-20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants submit that the present Amendment places the application in condition for allowance and does not generate any new matter issue or any new issue requiring any further search and/or consideration. Accordingly, entry of the Amendment and prompt favorable reconsideration pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 8-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,737,722, hereinafter "Yamamoto"). Applicants respectfully traverse. Claims 1-3 and 8-20 have been canceled and, therefore, the rejection is moot.

With respect to the Examiner's comment at page 4 of the final Office action, Applicants note that no statement of joint research agreement accompanied their response of April 14, 2005, as suggested by the Examiner.

Applicants note the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance included on page 4 of the final Office action. Entry of that Statement into the record should not be construed as any agreement with or acquiescence by Applicants in the reasoning stated by the Examiner. Applicants positions on the issues appear in Applicants' response of April 14, 2005. The Statement of Reasons for Allowance should not be used to interpret the cited claims, particularly to the extent if any that the Statement of Reasons for Allowance may differ from the express

language of the claims and/or Applicants' positions on patentability of those claims. It is respectfully submitted that the allowed claims should be entitled the broadest reasonable interpretation and broadest range of equivalents that are appropriate in light of the language of the claims, the supporting disclosure and Applicants' prosecution of the claims, without reference to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance.

It is believed that pending claims 4-7 and 21-28 are now in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request an early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application. If there are any outstanding issues which might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' representative at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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